

From USPS

Angel with Lute

This stamp features a detail of a fragment of a circa-1480 fresco by Melozzo da Forlì (1438-1494). Clad in red and green, an angel with a halo strums a lute and glances downward. The original fresco fragment measures approximately 37 inches by 46 inches. The fragment shown on the stamp and thirteen other surviving fragments from the fresco are on display in Room IV of the Vatican Pinacoteca (art gallery) in Rome.

Commentary by publisher John Dunn:

This is not a “Christmas” stamp, although it is being issued on October 21, which is the approximate date when the annual Christmas stamps are issued. Instead, the same Madonna & Child stamp that was issued last year will be used again this year.



The Angel With Lute stamp was announced a couple of years ago, but its release was postponed. The reproduction of Angel with Lute by the early Renaissance painter Melozzo da Forlì is not necessarily intended for winter holiday mail. The release is an experiment to see if stamps of this style can see more extended use beyond the holidays.

It could very well qualify as a Traditional Christmas stamp, although my guess is that NOT using a Madonna & Child theme would create a mini-furor.

The Angel With Lute, instead is being designated as a Special Stamp. Similar to Love and other Special Stamps, this means that it—theoretically at least—should continue to be available year round at post offices across the country.